

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

To place the subject application in better form, the specification has been amended to correct minor informalities. Also, a new abstract is presented in accordance with preferred practice. No new matter has been added by these changes.

Claims 2, 6-35, 37 and 40-90 are presented for consideration. Claims 2, 6-18, 16, 22-32, 34 and 35 are independent. Claims 1, 3-5, 36, 38 and 39 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 2, 6-8, 13, 16, 18 and 22-35 have been amended to clarify features of the subject invention, while claims 40-90 have been added to recite additional features of the subject invention. Support for these changes and claims can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 2, 6-34 and 36 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter, and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form to include the recitations of their respective base and intervening claims. To expedite allowance of this application, Applicant has so rewritten claims 2, 6-8, 16, 22-32 and 34 in independent form. In addition, Applicant has amended independent claim 35 to substantively include the features of dependent claim 36. Applicant submits, therefore, that independent claims 2, 6-8, 16, 22-32, 34 and 35 should be deemed allowable at the outset. In addition to these claims being allowable, Applicant submits that claims 9-15 depending from independent claim 8, claims 17-21 depending from independent claim 16, claim 33 depending from independent claim 32, and

claim 37 depending from independent claim 35 likewise should be deemed allowable at the outset. In addition to these claims being allowable, Applicant submits that newly presented claims 40-90, variously depending from the above-noted independent claims, also should be deemed allowable. The Examiner will note that claims 40-90 have been patterned after prior dependent claims 3-5.

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 1, 3-5, 35 and 37-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,590,636 to Nishi in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,437,463 to Hazelton et al. and published U.S. patent application number 2005/0005702 to Osuga. Applicant submits that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention, as previously recited in claims 1, 3-5, 35 and 37-39. Therefore, this rejection is respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, as discussed above, Applicant has amended claims 2, 6-8, 13, 16, and 22-35 and has added claims 40-90 in an effort to expedite allowance of this application. Applicant submits, therefore, that the above-noted rejection has become moot and should be withdrawn.


For the reasons noted above, Applicant submits that all pending claims, namely claims 2, 6-35, 37 and 40-90, should be allowable. Applicant submits, therefore, that the instant application should be in condition for allowance.

Applicant requests that the Examiner contact his undersigned representative should any matters be deemed outstanding precluding allowance of the instant application.

Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010 All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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